

Case 3076

***Tanaecia coelebs* Corbet, 1941 (Insecta, Lepidoptera): proposed conservation of the specific name**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is to conserve the specific name of *Tanaecia coelebs* Corbet, 1941 for a butterfly from southeast Asia (family NYMPHALIDAE). This name has been consistently used for the species but it is now known that *T. heringi* Niepelt, 1935 is a senior synonym. The latter name has remained unused since its publication.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Lepidoptera; NYMPHALIDAE; southeast Asia; *Tanaecia coelebs*.

1. In 1935 Niepelt (p. 13) described and illustrated a nymphalid butterfly, *Tanaecia heringi*, from Padang Bovenland, West Sumatra. The name was based on a male specimen which is now preserved in the Museum für Naturkunde der Humboldt-Universität, Berlin; it is labelled: (red labels) 'Holotype *Tanaecia heringi* Niepelt, 1935', '*Tanaecia heringi* Niep. ♂ Collection Niepelt/fort du Kock, Padang Bovenland, West Sumatra, leg. Sopp. Dr Schmidt'. Niepelt noted the species as being similar to *T. clathrata* (Snellen van Vollenhoven, 1862), described from southern Borneo, but with the upper sides of the wing much darker, the usual dark markings being scarcely recognisable, and the distal band on the hind wings greenish-blue. The ground colour of the underside of the wings was described as chocolate brown, with a violet blue coating to the distal part of the hind wings.

2. In 1941 Corbet (pp. 508-509, 512) described *Tanaecia coelebs* from the same locality. He examined five male specimens, from which he selected one, in the Natural History Museum, London, as the holotype. The specimen is preserved in the type cabinet no. NYM 4-12 and is labelled: (red labels) 'Holotype *Tanaecia coelebs* Corbet', 'Adams Bequest B.M. 1912-399. Ex Coll Van de Poll', '*Tanaecia Genitalia*'. Corbet did not mention Niepelt's publication, of which he was presumably unaware, but he also described the butterfly as distinctive among species of *Tanaecia* by having the upper wing surface a deeper, richer, purple-brown or black, and the broad, pale border of the hind wing as blue or purple. The under wings were chocolate-brown, with the hind wing broadly bordered with lilac.

3. I have examined the holotypes of both *Tanaecia heringi* and *T. coelebs* and have found that they represent the same species. It follows that under the Code the specific name *heringi* should be adopted for the combined taxon. However, the name *coelebs* has been in consistent use in all publications on the species for nearly 60 years, while *heringi* has never been used since its publication. Examples of well-known recent works in which the name *coelebs* has been used include Corbet & Pendlebury (1956,

p. 229), Fleming (1975, p. 49, pl. 46, fig. N96; 1983, p. 51, pl. 46, fig. N96), Eliot (1978; 1992, p. 183), D'Abbrera (1985, p. 344, pl. 344) and Tsukada (1991, p. 333, pls. 38, 39).

4. Tsukada (1991) figured the female of the species and described four new subspecies (*Tanaecia coelebs regalis* from West Malaysia; *T. c. solium* from Natuna island; *T. c. regina* from South Sumatra; and *T. c. mulsa* from Belitung and Bangka islands). The nominotypical subspecies is found in North and West Sumatra. Two further subspecies, as yet unnamed, occur on Batu and Lingga/Singkep islands. I have examined type material of Tsukada's subspecies; I recognise the names as valid and consider that they are unlikely to be synonymised in the future.

5. In order to maintain stability and universality in the usage of the name for the species, I propose that the name *Tanaecia coelebs* Corbet, 1941 should be conserved.

6. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *heringi* Niepelt, 1935, as published in the binomen *Tanaecia heringi*, for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *coelebs* Corbet, 1941, as published in the binomen *Tanaecia coelebs*;
- (3) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *heringi* Niepelt, 1935, as published in the binomen *Tanaecia heringi* and as suppressed in (1) above.

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